



Howard County...So Much! So Close!

Power shop in **The Mall in Columbia** that boasts a multitude of trendy shops, theme restaurants and state-of-the-art movie theater! Take in live entertainment and cultural events at local venues. Escape to centuries ago and stroll along Main Street in **Ellicott City** now the destination for home décor and more! Go antiquing in fabulously restored **Historic Savage Mill's** one-of-a-kind shops. Memorable Zagat® rated dinning experiences abound in our cozy country inns, cool microbreweries, hip bistros and stylish cafes!

Howard County maintains lovely lakes, parks, tot lots, **over 80 miles of paved pathways**, a visual arts center, swimming pools, tennis clubs, an ice rink, an equestrian center and a new **SportsPark** with miniature golf, batting cages and skateboard facility!

National travel stories in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* is making Howard County a must see destination nestled between Baltimore & Washington, D.C.



WELCOME

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AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE TOUR



WELCOME

AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE

Welcome to Howard County! Known until 1851 as the Howard District of Anne Arundel County, Howard County has long been an area rich in its diversity of people and culture.

Howard County was mainly the farming and hunting grounds of Native Americans until 1608 when Captain John Smith of Jamestown sailed up the Patapsco River. Settling on land grants that were in many instances thousands of acres, early tobacco planters in the county imported Africans to provide the labor needed to maintain their vast estates. Although Maryland was home to many free African Americans, the majority arrived as slaves. However, many of the descendants of former slaves remained and became an integral part of the diverse culture of Howard County.

Anyone looking for information on the African American experience in Howard County should first visit the Howard County Center for African American Culture, located next to historic Oakland Manor. At the HCCAAC, visitors can learn of the early days of Mr. Herman Charity, the first African American to serve on the Howard County Police Force, and the county's current executive assistant to the County Executive, or Decatur Dorsey, the first African American to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for distinguished military service for his acts of bravery during the Battle of the Crater in Petersburg, during the Civil War. If you're looking for information on the history of education in Howard County, one little known fact

is that the first schools established by the Ellicott brothers were open to "any children residing in the village", this included the Native American and African American children in town. Even though the school no longer exists, there are other vestiges

of the African American citizens who lived and worked in town. When in Historic Ellicott city, visitors can go into the Isaac family log cabin, the oldest structure in town, which was also home to the congregation of St. Luke's AME church prior to 1890, when the current structure was built. St. Luke's was one of ten churches established for African American congregations. The Ellicott City Colored School, built around 1880, introduces its visitors to another period in the history of education for African American children in Howard County.

Many have heard of the friendship that existed between the Ellicotts and the self-educated astronomer Benjamin Banneker. Banneker, who was a free African American, lived the majority of his life on his family farm, just across the river from Ellicotts Mills. Visitors to the Benjamin Banneker Historic Park and Museum can view some of the actual instruments used by Banneker as he created charts to be used for the creation of his almanacs, the first to be written by a person of color.

Whether you are looking for information on the history of African Americans or a location for your next family or organization event, remember to look in Howard County. It's so much, so close.